

British Women Pilots' Association

Newsletter

Issue No. 103



Summer 2012

BWPA South East - Headcorn

Bruntingthorpe Aircraft Museum

FEWP Austria 2012

Part of Your Rudder is Missing!



Who's who in the BWPA

Committee

Chair / Careers: *Caroline Gough-Cooper*

Vice-Chair / PR: *Pauline Vahey*

Hon Secretary: *Vacant*

Hon Treasurer: *Rachel Ellis*

AJMT Trustee: *Julie Westhorp*

Newsletter Editor (Co-Opted):

Zita Morris

Ordinary Members: *Rosemary Clemo,*

Janet Chanides

Sales: *Nicky Rowan*

Off-Committee

Archivist: *Beverly Harrison*

Auditor: *Colin Hessey*

Education / Legal Advisor:

Dorothy Pooley

Events Coordinator: *Cheryl Sullivan*

FEWP Delegate / Awards: *Tricia Nelmes*

Membership: *Lesley Runnalls*

Regions Coordinator: *Katie Seaton*

Website / Database: *Carol Hedges*

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Aims of the BWPA

To promote practical schemes to assist women to gain flying licences of all types

To advise women on the training required and the opening available to them in aviation

To enable women in aviation to meet and exchange information of mutual interest

British Women Pilots' Association
White Waltham Airfield
Waltham Road
Maidenhead
Berks, SL6 3NJ
www.bwpa.co.uk

Newsletter submissions

We'd really love to share your stories, experiences and ideas with other BWPA members in the next newsletter. So, if you'd like to contribute please email your articles and photos to the editor at newsletter@bwpa.co.uk

Contents ©BWPA 2012

From the editor

This quarter's front cover image is one of my own – glider flying over the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall. This is where I spend the majority of my weekends, teaching air cadets to fly. So, unless you'd like to see more glider images, please do send me lovely pictures of your own aviating adventures. The newsletter itself is packed full of varied and interesting articles, from recounts of recent visits, to stories of breaking Concorde, to book reviews. *Zita*

Chairman's Comment

As a child one of my favourite TV shows was *The Whirlybirds*, the adventures of two American men in a Bell 47 helicopter; my favourite toy was a battery-powered helicopter that flew in a circle attached to a boom. I attempted DIY parachuting by jumping off a wall in the garden, hanging on to my mother's opened umbrella for grim death, and dreamt of soaring with the birds dangling from a hang-glider. I loved the thrill of flying off on holiday – still a glamorous and exciting mode of transport in those days – and had experienced travel in a small six-seater twin aircraft, but the idea that I might one day have a career in aviation – Airline Training Captain, Dash 8 Test Pilot, twice Ladies' World Helicopter Champion – never crossed my mind.

Careers advice eventually pushed me reluctantly down the road to medical school – a 9.00-5.00 desk job of any description never appealed – but it wasn't until I seized the totally unexpected and utterly life-changing offer of flying lessons with both hands at the age of nineteen that I discovered my true vocation.

So what has changed since I left school? Well, actually not that much. Yes, British Airways employed their first female pilot in 1985 and the RAF recruited their first in 1989, but the number of girls who step forward without prompting to pursue a career in aviation or aerospace is still pitifully low. Like me, too many girls are completely unaware of the many and varied job and career opportunities within the industry, from flying school administrator to airline CEO, air traffic controller, pilot or engineer. Cabin crew is a stereotypical exception.

At the Youth Aviation "Working Together" Education Conference at Brooklands in April the lack of involvement of the Guiding movement in youth aviation activities was highlighted and it struck me that the BWPA is ideally placed to catalyse greater participation. One of the three aims of the BWPA is to promote aviation to women so I want to use our links with AOPA, the LAA, Air League, GAPAN and other aviation organisations to establish a network of support for Girlguiding UK to help girls between the ages of 8-14 become

more aware of aviation and the part it plays in our daily lives.

This initiative requires little input from BWPA members directly although a few have already responded to the May eBulletin question and offered to speak about their aviation experiences to groups of youngsters locally. I see the Association's role more as coordinating interaction than delivering it but the more members who get actively involved the merrier. After all, we all started somewhere. Please think on this over the summer period – here is our chance to make a real difference.

Caroline

NEWS

Congratulations to:

Katie Seaton & Peter on the birth of David on 30 May, a lovely new brother for Huw

Clare Walker on being elected to the Aeronautical Society Council

Wendy Ryder on achieving the AOPA Silver Wings

In sympathy:

Sadly, Lesley Roff (BWPA Hon Secretary) died on 26 June, following a long illness, at a hospice close to her home in Milton Keynes. Her obituary will feature in the next newsletter.

Welcome to new members:

Jessica Anand (Peterborough, Cambridgeshire)

Michael & Denise Benson (Newton Abbot, Devon)

Lucie Harrison (Mountnessing, Essex)

Tracey Lester (Hildenborough, Kent)

Andrea Marshall (Hastings, Sussex)

Miriam Oliver (Ashford, Kent)

Karen Simpson (Edinburgh)

Maahjabeen Vanat (Birmingham)

Samantha Williams (Ashford, Kent)

And welcome back to:

Liz Moscrop (London)

Di Patten (Hastings, Sussex)

Membership List:

Remember that you can attain an up-to-date membership list by emailing info@bwpa.co.uk or writing to Membership List, 64 Manchester Rd, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 2JP.

Discount for older members:

Don't forget that the BWPA offers a discount on membership to those aged over 80 years. Please advise the Membership Secretary by emailing her at membership@bwpa.co.uk.

BWPA Committee dates:

The next meeting is Sat 29 Sep at 1000hrs at Cranfield Aerodrome. Lunch is provided and we aim to be finished by 1500hrs. All members are welcome to attend. If you're interested in coming along please contact Caroline Gough-Cooper at info@bwpa.co.uk.

Situation vacant:

The BWPA are still looking for a new Hon Secretary. If you are interested please email info@bwpa.co.uk and ask for the role description.

FEWP Austria 2012

This year's Federation of European Women Pilots (FEWP) weekend was hosted by the Austrians and took place in stunning Emmsdorf.

People flying private aircraft arrived at the nearby airfield of Krems, with those travelling on scheduled flights flying in to Vienna.

A number of BWPA members attended, including outgoing UK delegate and FEWP Secretary Tricia Nelmes, founding FEWP President Aileen Egan, Amy Chau and Sue Rose.

Tricia reports that the Slovenian delegate Jasna Jerman has taken over the presidency from the Swiss delegate, Diana Ferrero, who takes on the role of Secretary.

Amy sent in the following overview of the weekend:

The Krems airfield is about 70kms northwest of Vienna and the Pritz Hotel is in Emmersdorf which is around the beautiful Wachau area along the River Danube.

The weather was not quite on our side for the weekend but we still very much enjoyed the beautiful settings and organised activities which included a boat trip and wine tasting.

For me the highlight was the flight over the Danube in the glass cockpit (Cessna 172S Skyhawk) OE-DAS.

I even grabbed a short bike ride along the river. It is such a cyclist friendly area that it's certainly now on my wish list for future visits.

Vienna is full of history and there is so much to see. Some people managed to visit a Spanish riding school and others went to the opera. Sue and I miscounted the 343 steps as 350 up to St Stephen Cathedral South Tower so we may have to return and re-count some other time. We would have loved to have visited the world's oldest zoo in Schonbrunn Palace but time was not on our side.

Too much to see and too little time! All in all a very enjoyable trip. 😊

[2013's event is scheduled to take place in Slovenia on the weekend of 8th June, so don't forget to make a note in your diary!](#)

[It's well worth attending - I know I will be.](#)

Headcorn Ladies' Evening (Sat 21 April)



I was recently invited by a newly-rejoined BWPA member, Di Patten, to speak to a group of women pilots flying from Headcorn Aerodrome (EGKH) in Kent. Di (with her first husband Christopher Freeman) started developing Headcorn in the 1960s to become the active airfield it is today. Her son Jamie Freeman is the current owner/manager.

The brief was to engage with as many local women pilots as possible with a view to establishing a BWPA South East regional group based at Headcorn. The ladies here are already a very active as a group and Jamie felt that becoming part of a larger organisation would help to encourage more women into aviation.

Around 25 people turned out for the event and we were treated to a short slide show by Di covering some of her many and varied aviation adventures in addition to my talk on the BWPA and a very tasty chilli con carne!

We have gained a number of new members as a result of the evening and I am confident that the Headcorn group will be great role models to encourage more women into aviation.

Aero Expo 2012

As in previous years BWPA members were prominent on the GASCo stand helping to run the Preflight Challenge at AeroExpo, a light-hearted competition in which show goers are encouraged to 'Spot the Defects' cunningly engineered on a light aircraft and designed to stimulate awareness of and debate about flight safety.

This year the stand was manned by Lesley Runnalls, Pauline Vahey, Rosemary & Keith Clemo, Mike O'Donoghue (Chief Executive of GASCo) and two Regional Safety Officers, Mike Benson and Andy Sephton.

The new BWPA wind-chaser banner also made its debut.



Pauline writes:

Saturday was a beautiful sunny day with a persistent breeze so we were all able to improve our tans. This year we saw visitors puzzling over a Tecnam Sierra RG with eight defects to find.

I'm always very disappointed that I find very few of the purported defects, and even when shown them I'm still not convinced I would spot them a second time around! I console myself that it's a home built aircraft and if I'd built it I would know every nut, bolt and hinge.

Business was brisk and everyone had fun, even those slightly reluctant to take part for fear of being shown up. (We do help by giving a few clues from time to time.)

To finish a fabulous day GASCO invited us to attend the close of day barbecue and party where a glass of wine was very welcome.

It was great to hear that GASCO is now on a sound financial footing, and reinvigorated on its mission to make us all safer pilots.

Air League Reception, St James' Palace - 31 May 2012

A number of BWPA members joined Chairman Caroline Gough-Cooper at the reception in London to see 2011's BWPA scholarship and bursary winners, Michelle Parker and Jenny Dodman, presented with their certificates.

Aileen Egan, Valerie Cahill and Rita Boniface were in their customary roles manning the reception desk, and Pamela Patten, Evie Saunders' daughter, was there to congratulate Linsey Running who received the Evelyn Saunders Memorial Cup, presented by Prince Philip.

Member Lydia Szkatula received an Air League Educational Trust bursary, and Dorothy Pooley was there to watch husband Bob, a long-time BWPA supporter, receive the Scott-Farnie Medal for most meritorious work in the field of air education.

Tribute to a true aviatrix: Evelyn Johnson

Born 4 Nov 1909, died 10 May 2012 at the age of 102.

Evelyn was an amazing was aviatrix, known by many as "Mama Bird". She

made it into the Guinness Book of Records for having the most flying hours of any woman and the most of any living person.



After learning to fly in 1944, Evelyn logged 57,635.4 flying hours, mostly in small aeroplanes, during her 60-year career. She flew an estimated 5.5 million miles — a distance equal to about 12 round trips to the moon.

She served as a colonel in the US Civil Air Patrol, and became the oldest flight instructor in the world, continuing to teach until the age of 96.

She was born Evelyn Stone on 4 Nov 1909 at Corbin, Kentucky, the daughter of a conductor on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

Her family moved to Tennessee when she was six, and she read English at the University of Tennessee, where she met her first husband, Wyatt Bryan.

After their marriage they moved to Jefferson City, Tennessee, to start a dry-cleaning business.

In 1944, when her husband was on wartime service with the Air Corps in

Florida, she noticed an advertisement for flying lessons in nearby Knoxville and decided to give it a try. It was, she recalled, *“love at first flight”*.

At a time when many women did not know how to drive a car, she learned to fly a single-engine “high wing” Piper J3-Cub, flew solo for the first time on November 8 1944 and earned her private pilot’s licence the following year. Later she mastered seaplanes, multi-engine aircraft, helicopters and transport planes.

In 1953 she became manager of a small airport at Morristown, Tennessee, where over the next half century she taught some 5,000 student pilots and certified more than 9,000 pilots for the Federal Aviation Administration.

In 1958 she won a Carnegie Foundation award for saving the life of a helicopter pilot who crashed during take-off at the airport.

For some 20 years she operated a flying service, taking sightseers, passengers and cargo around the country. She flew in the so-called “Powder Puff Derbies” (coast-to-coast races for female pilots), and raced from Washington to Havana in 1955. Though she had two complete engine failures, Evelyn never crashed. The record for hours flown is held by Ed Long, who flew more than 64,000

hours surveying power lines and whose last words, before his death in 1999, are purported to have been: *“Don’t let that woman beat me.”*

She made a valiant effort to do so, despite the onset of glaucoma and a car crash in 2006 which forced doctors to amputate her leg — she complained that it was not the flying that was the problem, but “getting the prosthesis into the small planes”. Though eventually forced to give up before beating Long’s record, she continued to manage the airport until the age of 101.

In 2007 Evelyn was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame at Dayton, Ohio, alongside the astronaut Sally Ride and the adventurer Steve Fossett.



Part of Your Rudder is Missing!

During a BWPA visit to the Royal Aircraft Establishment Farnborough on 8 March 2012 I was reminded of something I experienced as a cabin crew member some 14 years ago.

On 8 October 1998 British Airways Concorde G-BOAC was allocated to operate the morning supersonic service from London LHR to New York JFK under call sign Speed Bird 001.

We departed as normal from the Terminal 4 gate with just two engines started. (This reduces strain on the pushback vehicle, as even at idle the Concorde's Rolls Royce Olympus Engines would generate significant thrust.) Once away from the gate the remaining two engines were started to taxi the aircraft to the departure runway.

Following ATC clearance the pilots applied full power with reheat for take-off. This gave sporting acceleration down the runway and even with transatlantic fuel weight we were quickly airborne.

Re-heat was shut-down shortly after take-off, and we adopted a relatively low-level cruise, at just below the speed of sound, whilst heading towards Bristol.

Once over the Bristol Channel, the Concorde came into her own as full power with reheat was applied, enabling us to accelerate through the sound barrier.

Having passed through Mach 1 reheat was no longer required and we cruise-climbed to altitude 55,000 feet accelerating to Mach 2 (around 1350 mph) for the Atlantic crossing.

Meanwhile our 62 passengers quietly spent their time enjoying a champagne brunch, working or sleeping.

Once cabin service had been completed the Captain visited the forward galley area after chatting with the passengers along the way.

At approximately 0900 Eastern Standard Time off Newfoundland there was a noticeable thud/thump and slight shuddering of the aircraft.

Checking systems showed nothing untoward so the Captain asked me to walk back through the cabin to undertake a visual inspection of the wing and, in particular, the elevons.

Upon reaching the tail everything appeared normal. However, the crew in the rear of the aircraft had a somewhat different perception and asked me what had caused the "very

loud bang” they’d all heard a few minutes before.

At this stage nobody could answer that question and the flight continued without further incident, making a normal landing at JFK.

After all this time I can’t remember the exact timing but towards the end of the flight we received a message from Air Traffic Control saying “Part of your rudder is missing!”.

Once on the gate at JFK it became clear that 40% of our rudder had detached during the flight and it now looked like a huge bite had been taken out of it.

This incident had long faded from my memory until the recent BWPA visit, during which the remains of G-BOAC ‘s rudder (now in the FAST Museum) were pointed out to me by fellow cabin crew member, Lesley Runnalls.

I presume the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch, also based at Farnborough, must have donated the remains of the rudder to the museum after their analysis of the incident, which I believe, concluded the likely cause to have been delaminating of the composite structure at supersonic speed.

Nick Brett

Bruntingthorpe Aircraft Museum

Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome, in Leicestershire, is home to the Cold War Aircraft Museum and houses the Cold War jet collection.

If you’ve ever flown anywhere near Leicester you surely cannot fail to have seen that beautiful asphalt runway. Just shy of two miles long, the runway was necessary when the airfield was used as a heavy bomber base by the United States Air Force.

I was recently fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to fly into Bruntingthorpe and see a Lightning Jet engine run (the airfield also being home to the Lightning Jet Preservation Society).



The engine run proved to be very noisy and extremely hot. I only witnessed a static run but on some days the jet completes a full runway run and then deploys parachutes to enable the

aircraft to be stopped before take-off. Sadly, an actual take-off is not possible because the insurance premium is prohibitively expensive. I was told that doing the static runs also saves having to repack the parachutes every time!

Bruntingthorpe really is an amazing place. More than a dozen jets are on display and many are maintained in fully serviceable order.

A notable success was the restoration of the Avro Vulcan XH558 which I am sure many of you have seen flying at various airshows.

The elephantine Airbus Skylink is particularly impressive. Its huge bulk is quite a sight on the ground.



Bruntingthorpe is definitely well worth a visit. However, if you intend to fly in you do need to phone beforehand and obtain prior permission. Alternatively, you can visit by road on a Sunday when the airfield is open to the public.

When I flew in there was no-one to provide any documentation and communication was via someone on the ground with a hand-held radio.

Radio reception when contacting the airfield and on landing was intermittent and the signal was not that clear. I initially thought my radio was at fault, but another aircraft appeared to be having similar problems, so that was reassuring.

Below is a picture of G-BORK parked, with me just visible in the background.

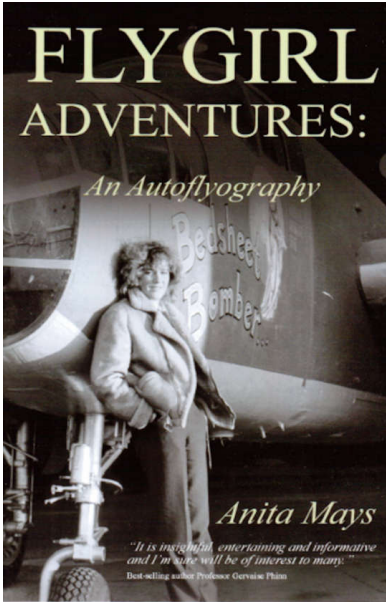


Unfortunately I didn't get to try out that lovely long runway as I was instructed to land on the shorter grass strip. Pity, as this was my first landing there, and I really would have liked to have used that welcoming length. Maybe I'll be able to use it at another time (provided the runway isn't being used for testing cars).

All in all this was an excellent trip which I'm hoping to take again. Perhaps next time, I'll take the short walk into the nearby village where I understand there are lots of lovely places to eat.

Janet Chanides

Book Review



This is a fascinating autobiography of a British pilot who has flown private jets for many years, as well as many interesting vintage aircraft.

Anita was brought up in Africa and she talks about the excitement of flying to and from boarding school in the UK. These flights really sparked her interest in aviation and flying. She says,

"I'd stand at the gate with my nose pressed against the window, mesmerised by the roaring engines and the flashing lights disappearing into the night sky. Nothing had ever filled me with so much longing".

Anita decided to become a flight attendant. It didn't occur to her that she could be a pilot.

She applied for many jobs but was repeatedly rejected. It seemed she was just not hostie material! So she decided to take flying lessons at Fairoaks in case this might lead somewhere.

"From the moment we got airborne on that crisp November morning I knew I had to do this".

She learned to fly and went to the USA to build hours. Within two years she'd become a flying instructor at Fairoaks. There are many amusing stories of her instructing days there. It appears this was a very happy time in her life.

When Anita had amassed enough hours she completed her CPL at Oxford and Bournemouth. It was tough for someone who had studied the Arts subjects but she did it. She applied for many jobs but, again, kept getting turned down.

Believe it or not, the first job she got was to ferry a B25 bomber from the USA to the UK! Her original flying

instructor was working with Aces High and they needed the aircraft in the UK for a TV series called Piece of Cake. This trip went well and after a few more

rejections, she finally got a 'proper' job flying a Citation 500 out of Heathrow.

There are many fascinating stories of life as a private jet pilot, including an interesting description of operating in Russia in the 1980s. It was a real struggle because of the lack of services and the extreme weather conditions. She describes Izhevsk in Siberia as

"the sort of place you would come to if you had 6 months to live because it would seem like 6 years!"

Her luck was in one day when she answered the phone only to be offered a trip as a hostess on a private Boeing 727. Anita took the job, met a pilot, found him a job, and a year later he offered her a job flying another 727.

More exciting adventures followed, now longer haul flights and more scope for heady days of opulence and mile high clubs! When she moved onto flying for a holiday airline, it was a complete contrast but gave her another aspect to the business.

Thanks to Aces High, Anita was also lucky enough to fly several interesting vintage aircraft including the B25, JU52 & P51 Mustang.

The book ends with amusing stories that Anita picked up from other crew members that she's met all over the world. '*More money than sense*' is a phrase that comes to mind when reading some of these!

Having worked in the private jet industry myself for many years (in ground operations) and having learned to fly at a similar time as Anita, I found the book really resonated with me as there are actually very few stories written about this side of the aviation business.

The book was just spoiled a little by the lack of proof reading. I've never seen so many spelling and grammar errors: *Stomp* instead of *Stampe*, *De Havillard* *Repide* instead of *De Havilland Rapide*. It's also a shame that there isn't a bit more about Anita's private life. We've no idea if she ever married or had children (probably why it's subtitled 'An Autoflyography').

Aside from these minor points, it was a very enjoyable book and thoroughly recommended, especially if you're thinking about a career in corporate aviation.

Nicky Rowan

Microlighting

by Girl Scout Emily Tenbroek (aged 10)

On Sunday 18th of September,
Guess what I did?
I went flying.
No not in a plane, I went for a flight,
In a microlight!

It was such fun,
Flying under the sun.
Up there it was jolly well freezing,



But flying in a microlight is very pleasing.
Over the hop farm we could not go,
As there was a model aircraft show.
I saw a motorbike race,
From up there they looked like they were going at a snail's pace.
I saw Canary Wharf far away,
It was like having the sight of a bird of prey.
We had to wear helmets heavy and white,
It was hard to keep your head upright.
The helmets were fitted with microphones,
And a set of earphones.
The microlight was shaped like a boomerang,
From it a sort of buggy hang.

So on a Sunday,
If you are wondering what to do,
Do you know what I recommend?
I recommend that you go for a flight in a microlight!

British Women Pilots' Association

Events 2012

Aug	19 th RAF Cranwell Fly-in	RAF Cranwell
	31 st LAA Rally	Sywell
Sep	1 st -2 nd LAA Rally	Sywell
	14 th Visit to Maidenhead Heritage Centre & White Waltham airfield	White Waltham
	22 nd Visit to Airbase & Midland Air Museum	Coventry airport
Oct	5 th -7 th Women's Balloon Event	Welshpool
Nov	2 nd RAeS WAA Conference	Bristol
Dec	1 st -2 nd BMAA Flying Show, NEC	Birmingham
	2 nd BWPA AGM, Christmas Lunch & Awards	Weston Manor

Cornwall Flying Club, Bodmin – Winner of the BWPA's Women in the Air Day Challenge 2011

Visit **BODMIN AIRFIELD**, Cornwall's premier GA airfield.

Home of the **Cornwall Flying Club**
and our resident maintenance organisation, Cornwall Aviation Services.

An ideal touring base when visiting the West Country by air.

Learn to fly at some of the best rates in the UK with many progressive options.
Or just sit and enjoy the ambience whilst sampling the delights of our Windsock Café.

Also:
The main operating base for the
aviation based charity



and
Home of Cornwall's
thriving LAA community.

CFC Contact: Mark Taylor 01208 821419
CAS Contact: Rod Bellamy 01208 821535
FOG Contact: Pete White 01752 406660
LAA Devon Strut: Steve Robson 01823 680784